

CITY OF MIAMI BEACH  
Office of the City Manager



Letter to Commission No. 322-2005

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**To:** Mayor David Dermer and Members of the City Commission

**Date:** January 3, 2005

**From:** Jorge M. Gonzalez  
City Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jorge", written over the printed name "Jorge M. Gonzalez".

**Subject:** 900 Collins Avenue – Coral Rock Home  
Demolition Status Report

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On December 15, 2004, the Miami-Dade County Unsafe Structures Board continued action on the above noted structure to the January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2005 meeting. As part of this action, the Unsafe Structures Board accepted the settlement agreement endorsed, in principle, by the property owner, City Staff and in the Historic Preservation Board Resolution of December 14, 2004, with the caveat that the Unsafe Structures Board would retain jurisdiction to hear the City's engineer report on whether the structure can be repaired.

Further, the Unsafe Structures Board determined that it will rule on whether or not the Building shall be demolished at the January meeting and required that all of the safety considerations imposed at the November 17, 2004 meeting remain in force.

The Building Official, in separate correspondence to the City's independent engineer, has outlined the minimum criteria and requirements that must be satisfied, in order for any restoration plan to meet minimum code requirements. In response to this correspondence, the City's independent engineer has indicated that he could not satisfy the requirements of the Building Official within a 30 day time period, not within the parameters of his current contract. The administration has contacted a second consulting engineer, Disimone, but they also indicated that they would have trouble meeting the requirements set forth by the Building Official within the current timeframe.

The Attorney for the owners of 900 Collins Avenue believes his clients would not object to Mr. Gopman proceeding with preparations for load testing the coral rock structure, provided all applicable liability issues could be properly addressed, indemnifying and holding harmless the owners, with any necessary insurance in place. However, any such agreement by the owners would also be contingent upon the Building Official approving Mr. Gopman's load testing plans, methodology and procedures, as well as approving access to the building relative to life-safety, and issuing a building permit for the testing to be performed.

At this point it is unlikely that all of the necessary preparations could be made and the testing completed in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Building Official by January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Mr. Gopman may appear before the Unsafe Structures Board on January 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss his assessment of the condition of the building, and the methodology he would propose to safely test and preserve part of the historic structure and bring it into compliance with the Florida Building Code. If his proposal makes sense, the Unsafe Structures Board may see fit to grant a further extension of time.

The Building Official has sent another letter to Mr. Gopman formally requesting a specific estimate as to the amount of time and the expense required to perform the work he has outlined. The

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Administration is awaiting a response from Mr. Gopman and if the scope of services exceeds \$25,000, Commission approval for such an expenditure would be required.

The City's Historic Preservation Board will be discussing this matter again at their January 11, 2005 meeting.

The Administration will continue to update the Commission on the progress of this matter, as it proceeds to the Historic Preservation Board and the Unsafe Structures Board. If you have any questions relative to this property, or need additional information, please contact me.

JMG:CMC:JGG:TRM  
DOCUMENTS

**Attachments**

c: Murray Dubbin, City Attorney  
Gary Held, First Assistant City Attorney  
Rhonda Montoya, First Assistant City Attorney  
Bob Parcher, City Clerk  
Phil Azan, Building Official  
Jorge G. Gomez, Planning Director  
William Cary, Assistant Planning Director  
Thomas R. Mooney, Design and Preservation Manager

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